XXVIII. *An Account of Baptiſms, Marriages, and Burials, during Forty Years, in the Pariſh of* Blandford Forum, Dorſet. *Communicated by* Richard Pulteney, *M. D. F. R. S.*

TO DR. WATSON, F. R. S.

SIR,

Read Mar. 19, 1778. AS the ſubjects of the following tables have been much diſcuſſed of late, I take the liberty of putting theſe into your hands, encouraged thereto by your aſſurances, when I had the pleaſure of ſeeing you laſt in town, that they might not improperly be laid before the Royal Society. If upon inſpection you ſhould continue to think ſo, you will do me the honour of preſenting them.

Excluſive of general curioſity, I was alſo induced to examine the regiſter of this place, in order to determine how far the general opinion, which gives the credit of extraordinary ſalubrity to this country, was founded on fact, as far as that could be proved by this mode of examination. I found that the regiſter had been kept with ſufficient

ufficient accuracy in the uſual method; that, ſince the recovery of this place from the dreadful fire of 1731, ſcarcely any new houſes had been built, at leaſt on any new ſite; that no fluctuation in the number of inhabitants from the introduction of any new manufactory, or from any other apparent cauſe, had taken place; and was therefore led to conclude, that the reſult might prove a tolerably fair one, and more eſpecially upon finding the exceſs of the baptiſms above the burials ſo ſmall as it appears to be.

In the year 1773, when theſe tables were drawn up, I alſo procured the number of the people to be taken; by which it appeared, that there were 446 families, reckoning a workhouſe of 44 perſons, and three ſchools containing 92, as four families only, which gives nearly $4\frac{3}{4}$ to a family. The whole number of ſouls in the pariſh was found to be, males 1174, females 936, total 2110; but it muſt be remarked, that in this number were not included any of the inhabitants of the cloſe adjoining villages of St. Mary, Blandford, Brianſton, or Langton.

From an inſpection of table the firſt it will be ſeen, that $55\frac{3}{4}$ is nearly the average of deaths for 40 years; and the average of the laſt ten years will appear to be 54: hence, taking 55 for the average number, which alſo will be ſeen to be the exact number of burials in the year

year preceding that of the ſurvey, it will be ſeen that about 1 in 38 or 39 dies yearly; and, as it can ſcarcely be doubted, that the errors of a ſurvey muſt be on the ſide of omiſſion, it may not be too much to allow 1 in 39 only.

From this reſult, therefore, it is manifeſt, that although the ſalubrity of this place does not equal what we read of ſome particular villages in the North of England, or of the diſtrict of Vaud, yet it turns out very much in favour of the general opinion, and very far beyond that of London and larger towns, where the number is found to be from 1 in 20 to 1 in 26 or 28.

I am, &c.

TABLE I. A table of the baptiſms, marriages, and burials, during forty years, in the pariſh of Blandford Forum.

	Baptiſms,			Marriages.	Burials,		
	Males.	Females.	Total.		Males.	Females.	Total.
1733	39	33	72	33	27	27	54
1734	35	32	67	27	26	20	46
1735	34	25	59	24	17	26	43
1736	39	22	61	27	29	17	46
1737	24	52	76	29	36	29	65
1738	38	29	67	30	26	25	51
1739	31	27	58	15	25	30	55
1740	25	22	47	14	33	31	64
1741	21	16	37	18	46	56	102
1742	34	24	58	20	36	28	64
1743	22	21	43	33	27	27	54
1744	32	32	64	23	16	18	34
1745	20	24	44	7	23	26	49
1746	21	29	50	24	21	26	47
1747	21	27	48	18	21	31	52
1748	28	19	47	26	34	33	67
1749	26	32	58	28	15	25	40
1750	24	29	53	26	23	23	46
1751	26	19	45	18	22	27	49
1752	27	33	60	8	21	26	47
	567	547	1114	448	524	551	1075

	Baptiſms,			Marriages.	Burials,		
	Males.	Females.	Total.		Males.	Females.	Total.
1753	22	24	46	24	54	42	96
1754	36	18	54	18	24	38	62
1755	30	21	51	8	35	39	74
1756	35	23	58	23	46	40	86
1757	21	11	32	17	29	25	54
1758	24	29	53	23	15	23	38
1759	20	29	49	13	22	32	54
1760	24	25	49	19	35	15	50
1761	35	20	55	24	28	15	43
1762	17	26	43	18	32	26	58
1763	30	16	46	26	15	20	44
1764	38	32	70	24	24	26	41
1765	38	30	68	18	37	28	65
1766	22	25	47	17	50	54	104
1767	32	25	57	20	12	21	33
1768	23	30	53	15	26	33	59
1769	39	24	63	25	23	23	46
1770	23	31	54	20	19	28	47
1771	28	25	53	20	27	19	47
1772	29	31	60	12	21	34	55
	566	495	1061	384	577	581	1156

Total

	Total baptiſms.	Marriages.		Total burials.
Males	1133	832	Males	1099
Females	1042		Females	1132
	2175			2231

The baptiſms among the Diſſenters are brought into this account only during the laſt ten years, males 39, females 54, total 93: if therefore the ſame proportion is taken for the firſt-three decennial periods, the total of the baptiſms will amount to 2454.

Small-pox years, of which diſtemper died as underneath:

In 1741	-	76
1753	-	40
1766	-	44
		160

In the year 1756, among the burials, 18 were of ſoldiers, who died during the time of the encampment.

This table does not include the cloſe adjoining villages of Langton, Brianſtor, and Blandford St. Mary.

TABLE II. The annual average of baptiſms and burials in the four decennial periods of the foregoing table, taking among the baptiſms 93 in each period for the number among the Diſſenters, which appeared to be the exact number baptized in the fourth period.

Annual average of the baptiſms in the		
firſt ten years,	$69\frac{1}{2}$	695
—— ſecond ten years,	$60\frac{1}{2}$	605
—— third ten years,	$58\frac{3}{10}$	583
—— fourth ten years,	$57\frac{1}{10}$	571
In the 40 years,	$61\frac{1}{4}$	2454

Annual average of the burial in the		
firſt ten years,	59	590
—— ſecond ten years,	$48\frac{1}{2}$	485
—— third ten years,	$61\frac{1}{2}$	615
—— fourth ten years,	54	541
In the 40 years,	$55\frac{3}{4}$	2231

The exceſs of baptiſms over the burials in forty years, 223.

TABLE

TABLE III. Shewing the whole number of burials in each month, and each quarter of the year collectively throughout the whole of the above period, diſpoſed in two columns, in the latter of which, thoſe who died of the ſmall-pox are excluded, ſerving to illuſtrate the different ſalubrity of the ſeaſons.

	Winter.			Summer.	
January	220	204	July	146	145
February	218	200	Auguſt	144	144
March	223	195	September	165	162
	661	599		455	451
	Spring.			Autumn.	
April	193	170	October	172	171
May	218	184	November	174	170
June	190	166	December	168	160
	601	520		514	501